

C O P Y

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D E P A R T M E N T O F S T A T E

Memorandum of Conversation

Date: June 16, 1958

Subject: Amendment to Communications Act

Participants: General Wilton Persons, Deputy Assistant to the President  
Mr. Allen Dulles, Director, CIA  
Deputy Under Secretary Robert Murphy  
Mr. Jack Anderson

Copies to:

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CIA

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Together with Mr. Allen Dulles, I had breakfast today with General Persons and Mr. Jack Anderson for the purpose of discussing the possibility of legislation at this session of Congress to amend the Communications Act permitting diplomatic missions in Washington, on a reciprocal basis, to operate radio transmitters.

General Persons informed us that he had canvassed the situation again and had found the atmosphere unfavorable to the passage of this legislation at the present session. He had consulted, among others, Messrs. Rayburn, Martin and Knowland. While believing that there would be little or no difficulty with people like Oren Harris (House Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee) or with people such as Senator Magnuson, it would be impossible to have legislation of this character slip through without floor debate. General Persons thought that it would be a distinct risk, that some of the less responsible elements up for reelection this year would try to gain publicity for themselves in a way that would damage chances of passage of the legislation. Conceivable harm to our international relations might also be provoked. It would be difficult in the legislation to distinguish as between certain countries and others.

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General

State Department review completed

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General Persons and Mr. Anderson are fully aware of the difficulties involved. We emphasized again the successful manner in which

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General Persons declared himself in agreement. We discussed the possibility that the Federal Communications Commission might conceivably raise the issue; that a violation of American law is involved. Mr. Dulles referred to diplomatic immunity and the right of the diplomatic mission to communicate with its government.

General Persons agreed to canvass the situation further in Congress

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TRANSMITTAL SLIP		DATE 6/26/58
TO: Mr. Houston		
ROOM NO. 221	BUILDING East	
REMARKS:  <p style="text-align: center;">LKH LPH JSW</p> <p>John, The boss gets off on the immunity idea but I don't think it's pertinent. Neither does State.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">LPH HMM</p> <p style="text-align: right;">JW</p>		
FROM: [Redacted]		
ROOM NO. 2030	BUILDING I	EXTENSION [Redacted]
FORM NO. 241 1 FEB 55		
REPLACES FORM 36-8 WHICH MAY BE USED.		
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